

June 11, 2016

Dear US Army Corps of Engineers, WA Dept. of Ecology and Cowlitz County:

Re: the Millennium Bulk Terminals Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

I support the “no action” alternative in the Millennium Bulk Terminals Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Millennium’s proposed coal export terminal would harm communities throughout the Northwest, with the most intense impacts felt in Longview, Washington, near the proposed terminal site as well as among residents along the Columbia River from Longview to Astoria. The project harms our health and safety, air and water quality, and natural resources. I urge your agencies to protect public health and natural resources. Reject coal export.

**Economy:** This is a short term commodities business that will disrupt the community, the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of citizens and endanger our most valuable natural resources. The energy consultancy, Wood Mackenzie forecasts a drop in thermal coal demand by China of 50-100 million metric tons annually for the next few years. They report that “When nuclear comes online and hydro comes online you can’t stop them from replacing coal.” Although the report highlights the impact of higher tax payments, it fails to delineate the higher costs to the taxpayer in increased fire and police costs; the building of the overpass at Oregon way, increased demands on infrastructure etc. The report should provide a detailed cost benefit analysis’s people of Cowlitz County and others along the train and shipping routes will pay the price while reaping few if any benefits. The recent derailment of an oil train in Oregon is just one example of the unintended costs to taxpayers associated with this type of project. The dangers this project entails or borne by the citizens; the benefits flow to the miners, the railroads, the shippers and the Chinese.

**Climate Change:** Washington state is a national leader in the fight to combat climate change. Considering rail and vessel emissions alone, this project would be one of the biggest greenhouse gas emitters in Washington state. Coal export undermines the state’s hard work to combat climate change and protect future generations.

**River Traffic:** The increase in the number of ships carrying coal is dramatic is the increased chance of a major spill in the Columbia River. As we saw earlier this year, a bulk container ship ran aground and ripped a large hole in its haul. It is one impact to have wheat or logs dumped in the river, but it would be devastating to have coal or any other type of fuel dumped after an inevitable accident.

**Health & the Environment:** The Draft EIS reveals many serious impacts to human health and the environment. It dismisses other impacts without a valid basis. The Final EIS should incorporate the best available science, real world examples, and a comprehensive Health Impact Assessment. The agencies undercut public, tribal, and agency input by failing to complete a Health Impact Assessment before releasing the Draft EIS. We ask that the final EIS evaluate the health impacts as they relate to the already unhealthy population of Cowlitz County. While ambient air quality under the current EIS may be thought safe, it does not address the impact of those with sensitivity. That is a large portion of our population, especially, young children with increasing rates of pulmonary problems such as asthma.

**Noise:** Although the EIS addresses noise pollution it also points out the noise from the trains is regulated by the Federal government and that there are no specific regulations to address the issue. We live across the river from Port Westward and are negatively impacted by the locomotive and car/wheel

noise there. We often have to close our windows at night just to be able to sleep. Your noise monitors cannot measure the psychological impact of noise on residents.

**Rail Traffic:** The Draft EIS demonstrates Millennium would have a severe impact on rail and road congestion. Because Millennium cannot fix this significant harm—from mine to terminal—the agencies should deny permits. As the report points out, the current rail lines cannot handle the increased capacity and there is not guarantee that the improvements required will be made. We have no trust in “promises.”

**Truck Traffic:** It is difficult to fathom how the EIS downplays the impact of 88,000 truck trips, 35,000 rail cars, and 1,130 barge trips. The numbers are astounding. These will impact the quality of life for our residents.

**Weak & Unenforceable Mitigation:** In some instances, the Draft EIS claims mitigation can reduce coal dust, rail traffic, and other project impacts. For example, to mitigate coal dust from the terminal, the Draft EIS proposes a reporting process for coal dust complaints. This borders on offensive. A phone call or email to complain about coal dust fouling a person’s lungs, home, and river is not “mitigation.” The agencies should revise the Draft EIS and remove inadequate, unsupported, and unenforceable mitigation. Also, the proposed mitigation efforts including complaint lines etc. make no difference. We have experienced their ineffectiveness with the noxious emissions from Weyerhaeuser as they continue to emit noxious fumes. There are no effective penalties for violating these requirements. These firms can and do afford major fines.

**Social Cohesion:** The report minimizes the impact of social cohesion. These fossil fuel proposals are tearing the community apart. They provide an easy fix for politicians who then fail to look for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs for our community rather than 19<sup>th</sup> century commodities jobs. Our brighter youth leave town for college and few come back because there is no work for the college educated. This project will continue to move Longview in the direction of the old rust belt cities of the east and Midwest.

**Tribal Rights:** As a country, we have too often ignored our promises to our Native American Population. This project will negatively impact their treaty rights, and that alone should lead to denial.

**Socio-economic issues:** Minority and low income people are the most impacted by this project. Longview has been chosen as the “last chance” location for this terminal because its population is poorly educated and does not have a political voice. Large amounts of private money have gone into building support for this project among those who will benefit most, politicians who want tax dollars, local business owners who will see a short term boost in business and the coal industry. We hope that this EIS process will give voice the hundreds of thousands of citizens who will be negatively impacted by this project rather than the few hundred who will benefit,

We appreciate the work you have done on this complex issue.

Thank you,

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